1. THE GRYPHS OF TROPICA ARE NOTED FOR TWO QUALITIES-- THEIR VICIOUSNESS AND THEIR SPEED. SUCH CRACK RIDERS AS FLASH AND ZARKOV HAVE LITTLE TROUBLE MASTERING THEIR STEEDS AND, BEFORE LONG, THE FUGITIVES HAVE LEFT THE MOUNTAINS BEHIND THEM AND ARE DEEP IN THE TROPICAN JUNGLE.

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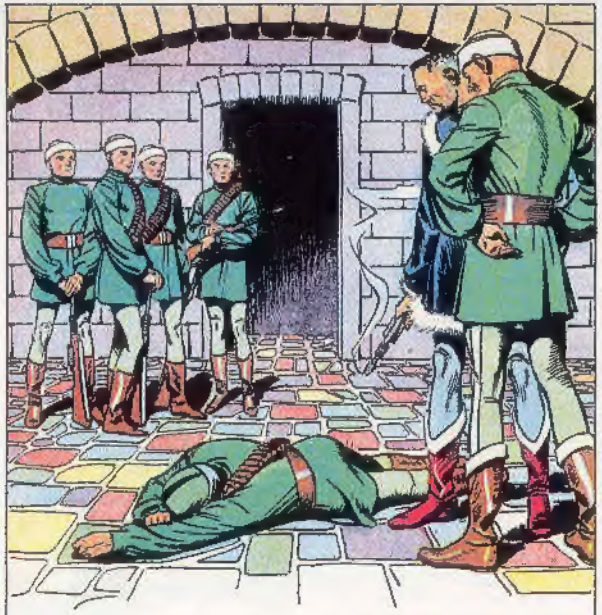
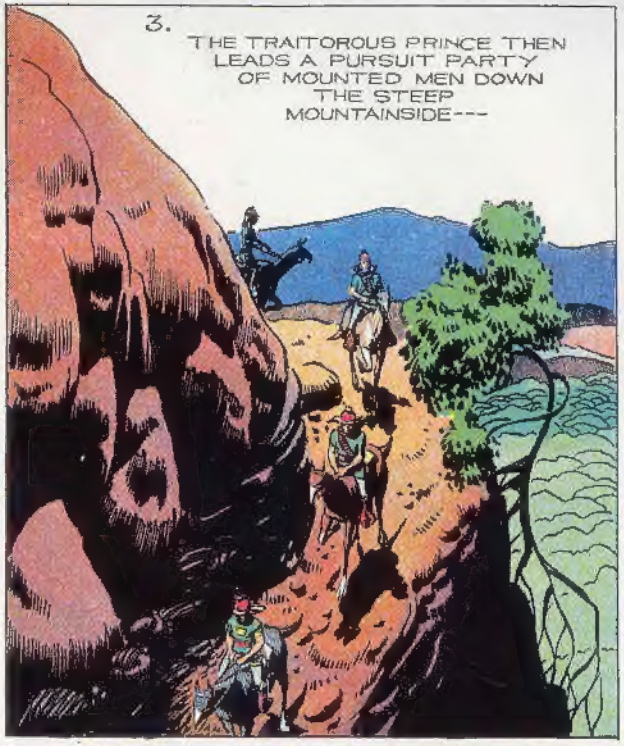
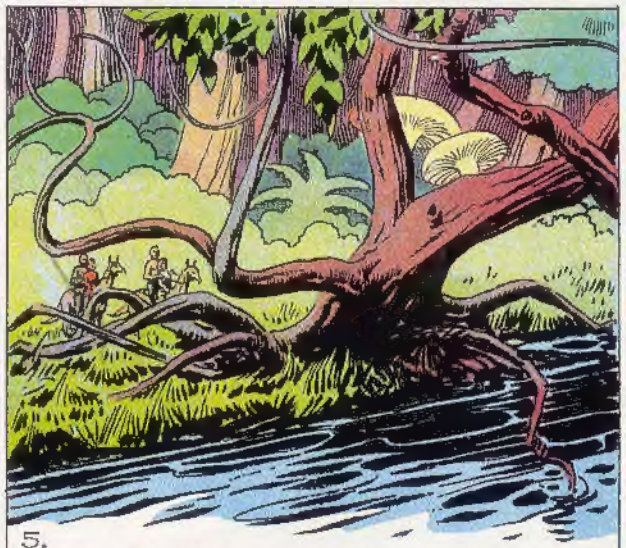


2. THE USURPER, PRINCE BRAZOR, IN HIS OWN RUTHLESS MANNER, PUNISHES THE UNFORTUNATE GUARD WHO FAILED TO STOP THE ESCAPING PRISONERS---



3. THE TRAITOROUS PRINCE THEN LEADS A PURSUIT PARTY OF MOUNTED MEN DOWN THE STEEP MOUNTAINSIDE---

4. AN EERIE HOWL REACHES THE EARS OF FLASH AND HIS FRIENDS. DESIRA TURNS PALE WITH FURY: *"BLOODWOLVES!"* SHE GASPS, *"THAT INSOLENT DEVIL IS HUNTING ME, HIS QUEEN, LIKE A RUNAWAY CONVICT! I'LL HAVE HIM FLAYED FOR THIS!"*



5. BEFORE LONG, THE FOUR FRIENDS REACH THE BANK OF A BROAD RIVER: *"THEY'RE GAINING ON US AND WE'RE CUT OFF!"* THE QUEEN TELLS FLASH, *"GRYPHS WON'T SWIM!"* BUT FLASH WHEELS HIS MOUNT TOWARD A GIANT TREE, SAYING: *"MAYBE NOT --BUT THEY CAN CLIMB! HANG ON EVERYBODY-- WE'RE GOING UPSTAIRS!"*

NEXT WEEK: **TRAIL'S END**

1. THEIR FLIGHT FROM BRAZOR AND HIS BLOOD-WOLVES BEING ARRESTED BY A STREAM, FLASH AND HIS FRIENDS FORCE THEIR SHARP-CLAWED GRYPHS UP INTO A GREAT TREE AND THENCE, BY WAY OF ITS WIDE-SPREADING BRANCHES, TO THE OPPOSITE BANK.
2. BUT THE SLAVERING BLOOD-WOLVES CANNOT BE DIVERTED FROM THE TRAIL--THEY LEAD THE HUNTERS TO THE SAME TREE!
3. A MIGHTY RIVER FINALLY BLOCKS THE FUGITIVES' ESCAPE. FLASH FREES THEIR WEARY MOUNTS AND, DRAWING HIS RAY-GUN, STARTS BLAZING AWAY AT THE BASE OF A TOWERING TREE---
4. THE FOREST GIANT CRASHES INTO THE RIVER AND FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA CLAMBER ABOARD--BUT NOT UNTIL FLASH HAS FIRED THE FOREST---
6-28-42.
5. THE FLAMES STOP BRAZOR AND HE GIVES THE ORDER THAT FLASH HOPED HE WOULD: "TAKE ONE BLOOD-WOLF UPSTREAM FROM THE FIRE AND ONE DOWNSTREAM. FIRE THREE SHOTS WHEN YOU PICK UP THE TRAIL OF THEIR GRYPHS!"
: NEXT WEEK: DRIFTING TO DISASTER
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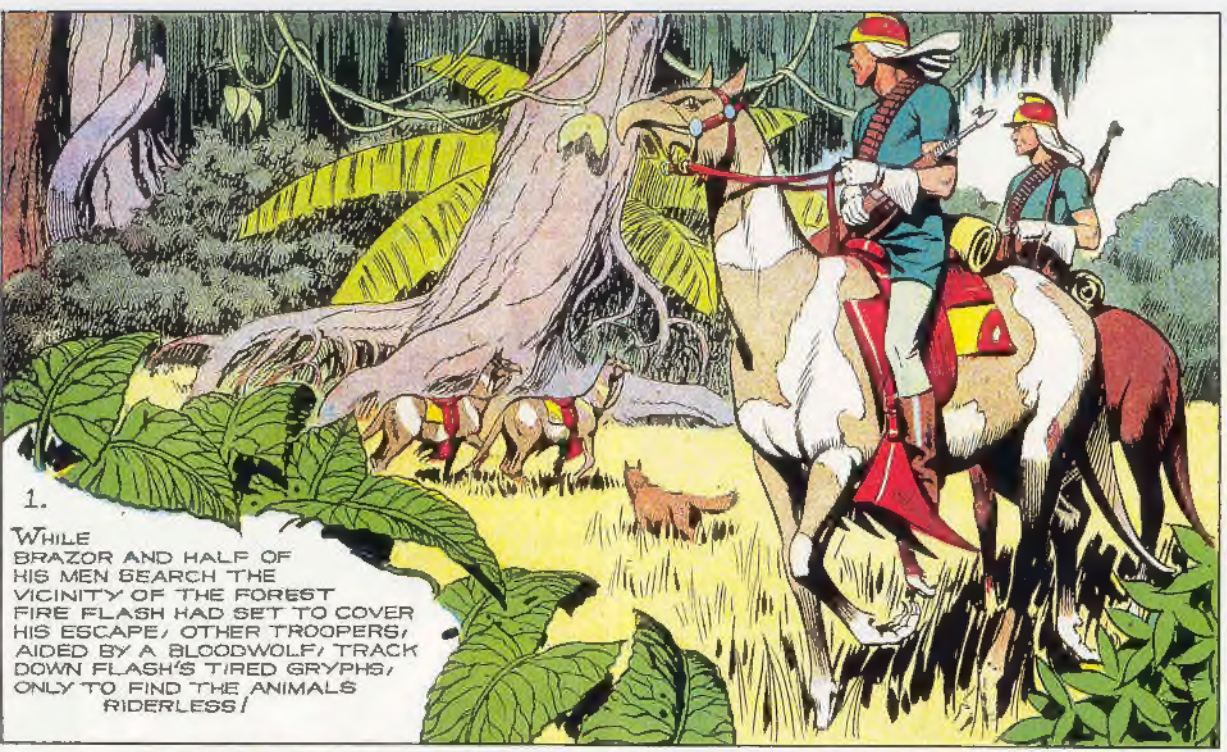
1.
WHILE BRAZOR AND HALF OF HIS MEN SEARCH THE VICINITY OF THE FOREST FIRE FLASH HAD SET TO COVER HIS ESCAPE, OTHER TROOPERS, AIDED BY A BLOODWOLF, TRACK DOWN FLASH'S TIRED GRYPHS, ONLY TO FIND THE ANIMALS RIDERLESS!

2.
MEANWHILE, FROM THE TOPMOST BRANCHES OF A GREAT TREE, BRAZOR GAZES BEYOND THE BLAZING FOREST TO THE RIVER--AND HIS ESCAPING PREY: "YOU FOOLS!" HE BREATHES, "IF I DON'T GET YOU, WHIRLPOOL FALLS WILL!"

3.
THE SWIFT-FLOWING RIVER IS BEARING THE MAKESHIFT RAFT AND ITS OCCUPANTS AWAY FROM BRAZOR--BUT FLASH GROWS UNEASY AS AN OMINOUS ROARING SOUND REACHES HIS EARS---
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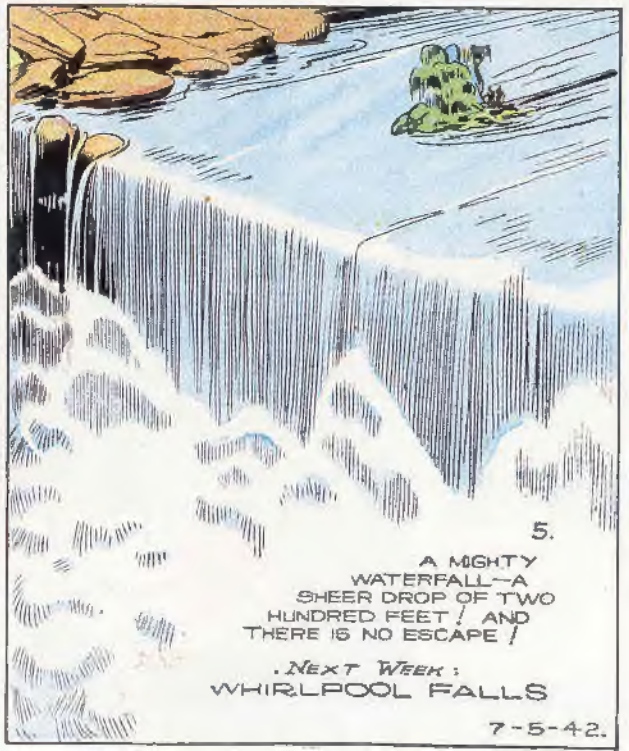
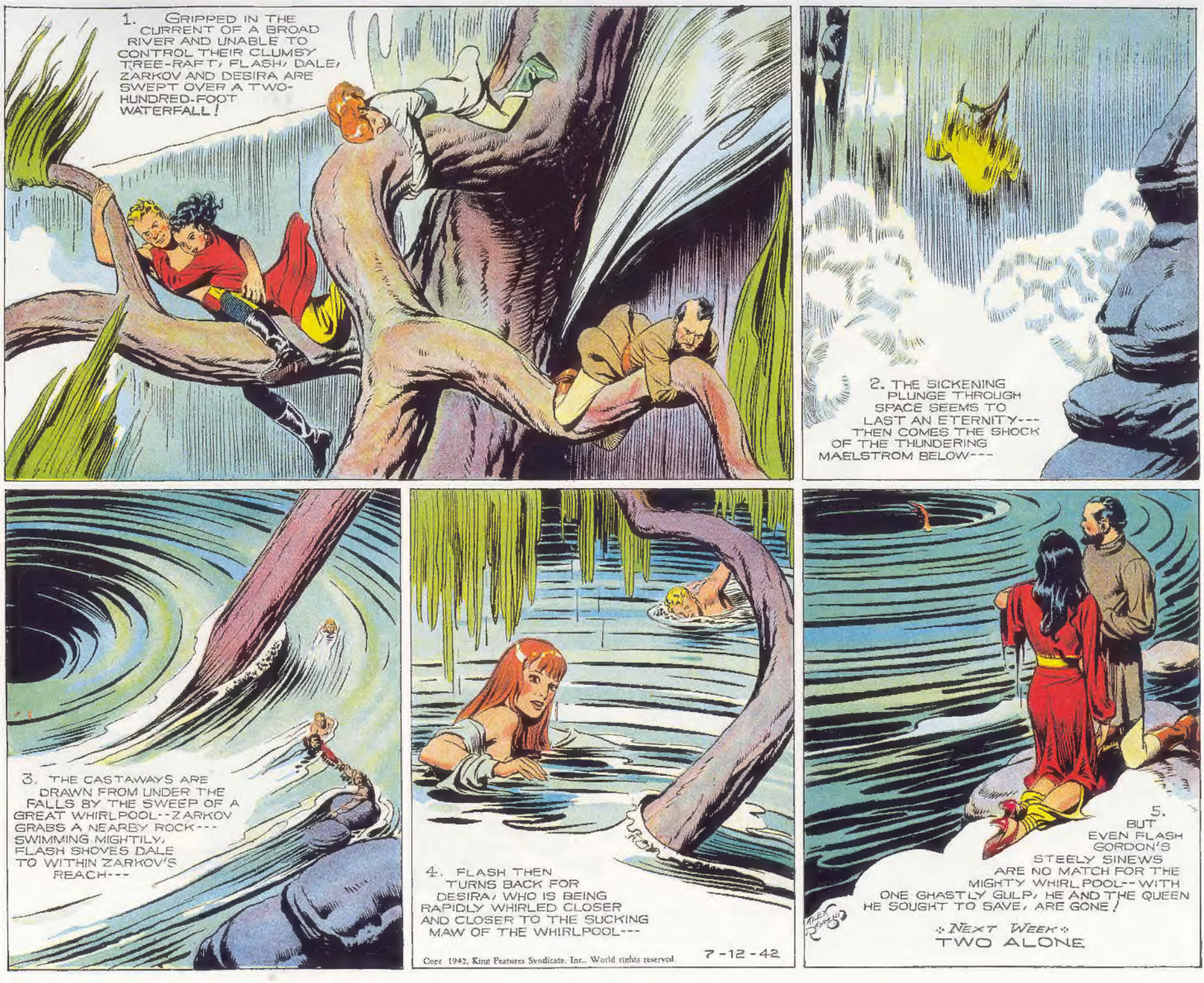
4.
FASTER AND FASTER RACES THE CURRENT--- THE TREE SPEEDS AROUND A BEND AND FLASH'S HEART SINKS AT WHAT CONFRONTS THEM---


5.
A MIGHTY WATERFALL—A SHEER DROP OF TWO HUNDRED FEET! AND THERE IS NO ESCAPE!
NEXT WEEK: WHIRLPOOL FALLS
7-5-42.


1. GRIPPED IN THE CURRENT OF A BROAD RIVER AND UNABLE TO CONTROL THEIR CLUMSY TREE-RAFT, FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA ARE SWEPT OVER A TWO-HUNDRED-FOOT WATERFALL!
2. THE SICKENING PLUNGE THROUGH SPACE SEEMS TO LAST AN ETERNITY--- THEN COMES THE SHOCK OF THE THUNDERING MAELSTROM BELOW---
3. THE CASTAWAYS ARE DRAWN FROM UNDER THE FALLS BY THE SWEEP OF A GREAT WHIRLPOOL--ZARKOV GRABS A NEARBY ROCK--- SWIMMING MIGHTILY, FLASH SHOVES DALE TO WITHIN ZARKOV'S REACH---
4. FLASH THEN TURNS BACK FOR DESIRA, WHO IS BEING RAPIDLY WHIRLED CLOSER AND CLOSER TO THE SUCKING MAW OF THE WHIRLPOOL---
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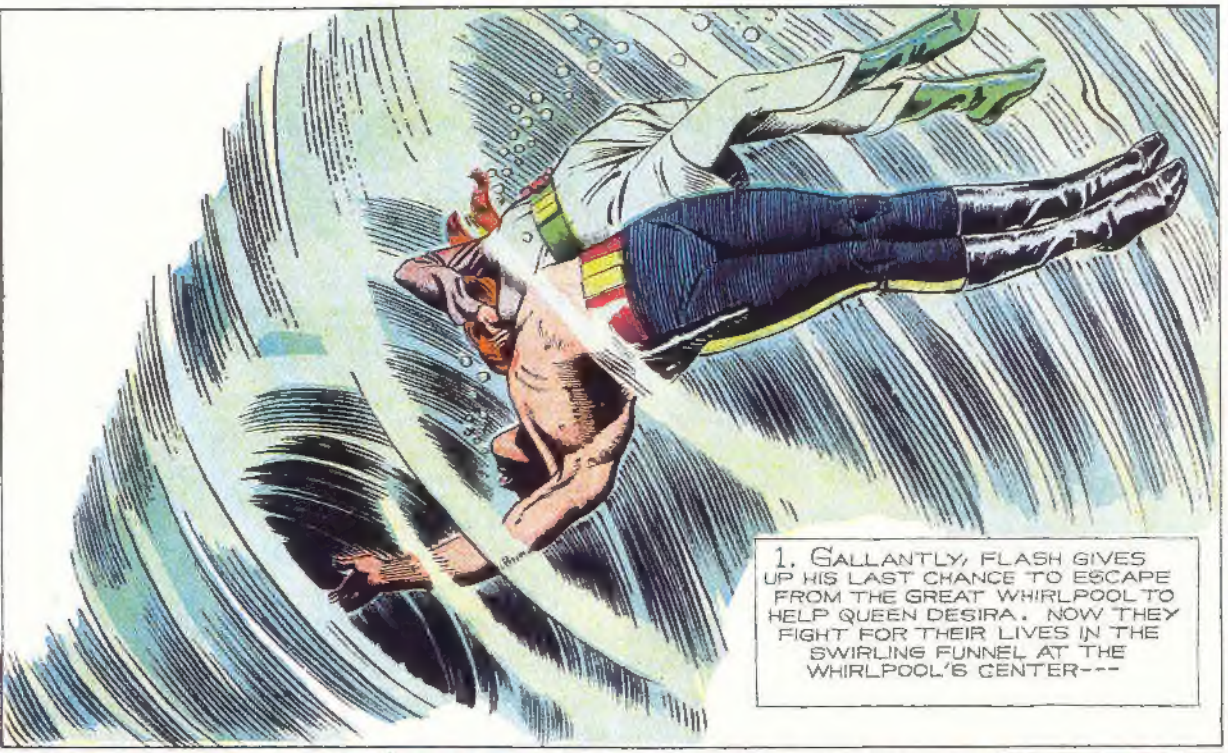
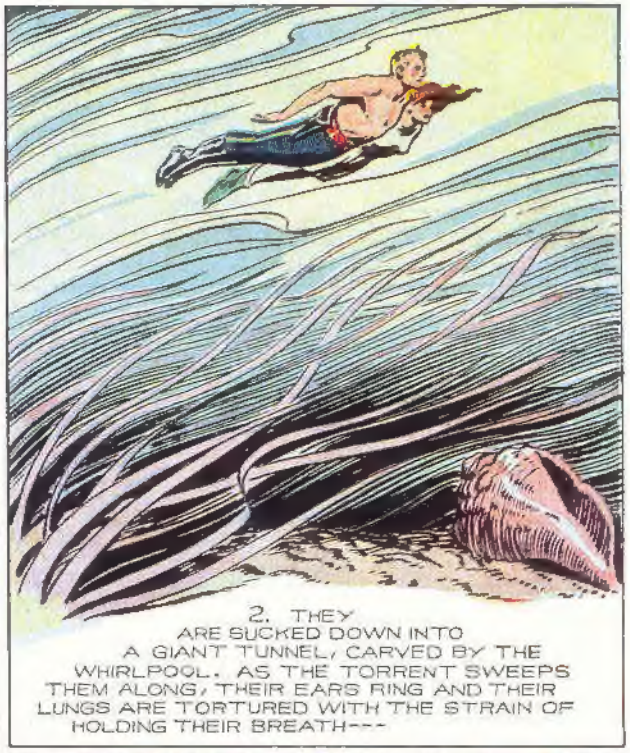
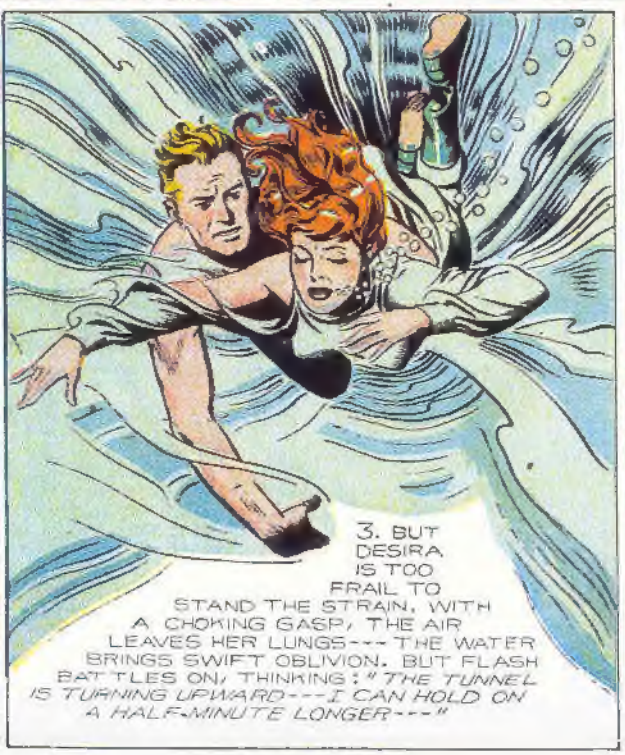
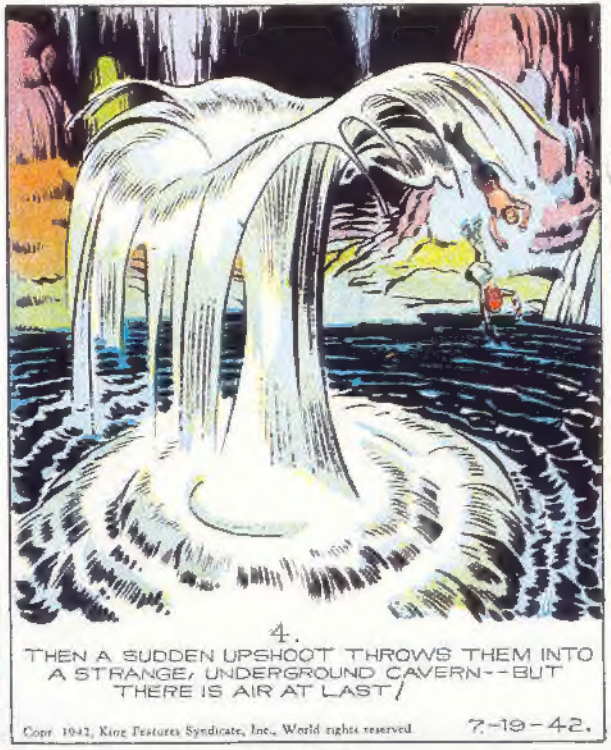
7-12-42
5. BUT EVEN FLASH GORDON'S STEELY SINEWS ARE NO MATCH FOR THE MIGHTY WHIRLPOOL--WITH ONE GHASTLY GULP, HE AND THE QUEEN HE SOUGHT TO SAVE, ARE GONE!
NEXT WEEK
TWO ALONE









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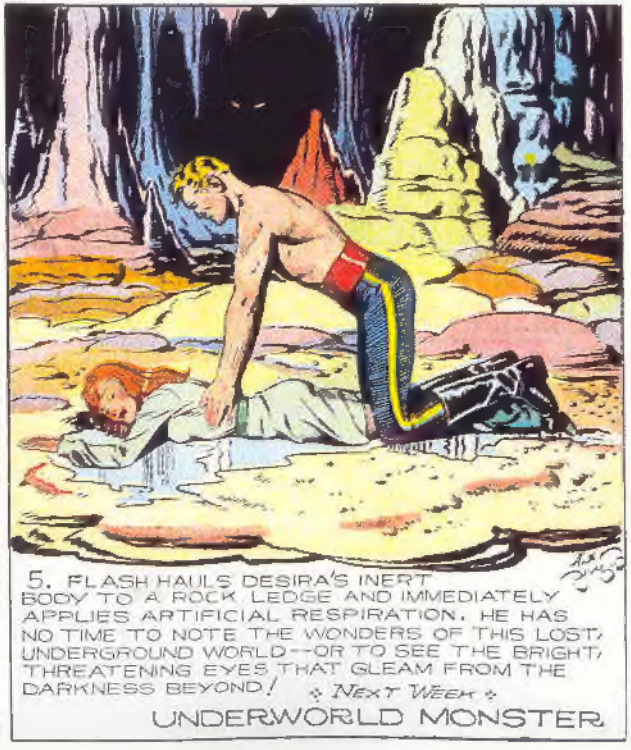

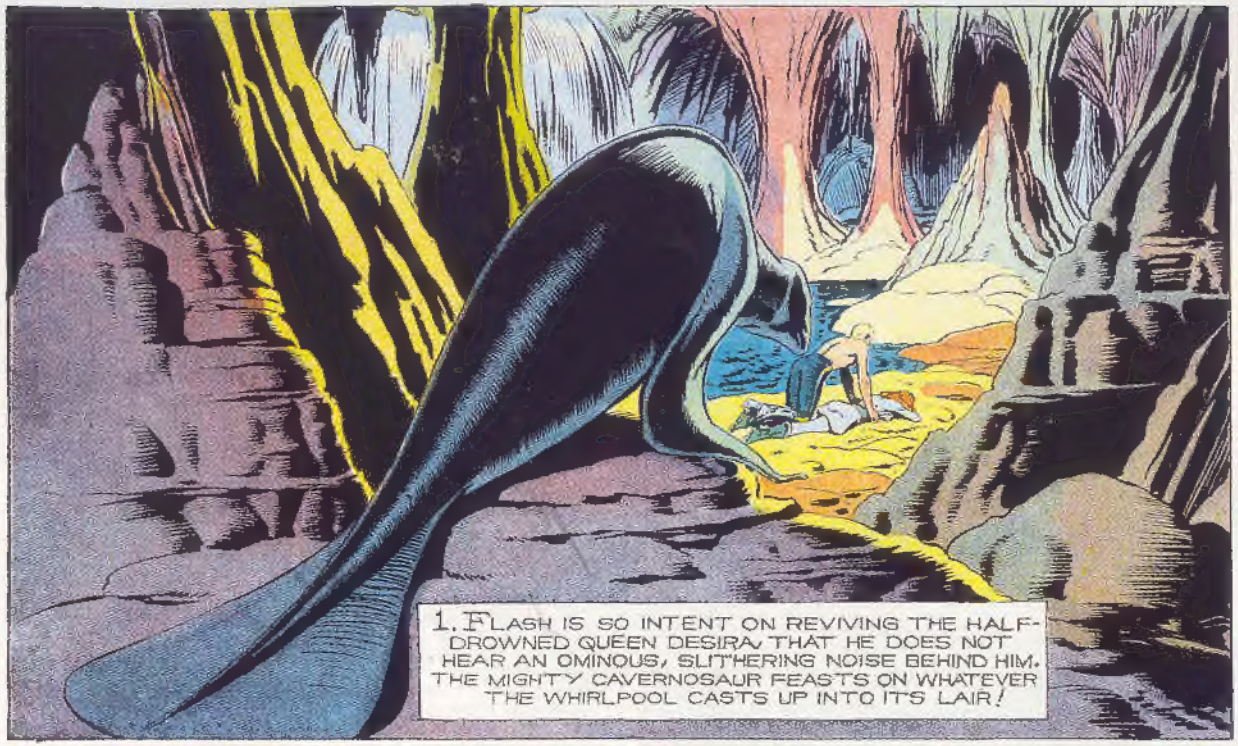

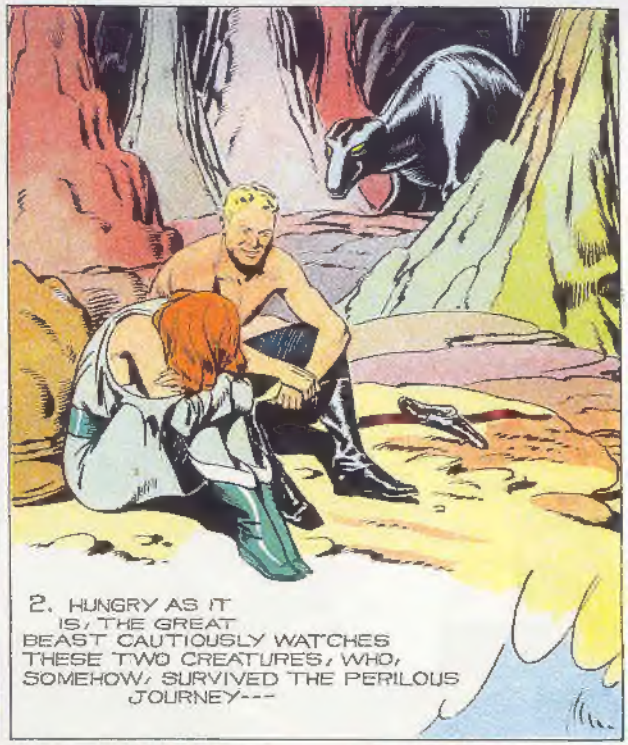

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A SURPRISE ATTACK BY A MAN-EATING CAVERNOSAUR SWEEPS FLASH INTO THE SWIRLING, UNDERGROUND TORRENT. HE CLAMPS HIS POWERFUL ARMS ABOUT THE MONSTER'S SLIMY NECK AND HANGS ON FOR DEAR LIFE, SHOUTING: *"THE GUN, DESIRA! SHOOT!"*

WITH TREMBLING FINGERS, DESIRA JERKS FLASH'S GUN FROM ITS HOLSTER---BUT SO RAPID ARE THE GREAT BEAST'S ROLLING CONTORTIONS, THAT SHE DARE NOT FIRE FOR FEAR OF HITTING FLASH.

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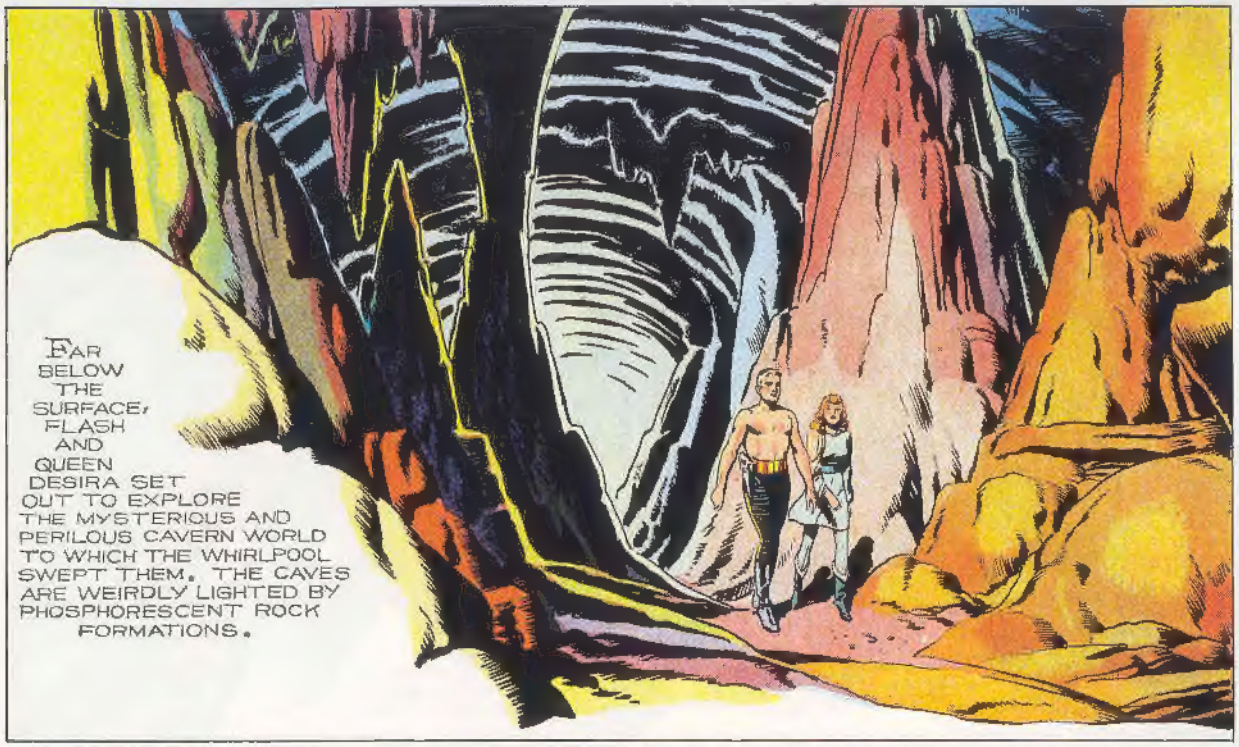
THE CAVE-DRAGON'S ANGRY THRASHINGS FINALLY BREAK FLASH'S GRIP, FLINGING HIM TOWARD DESIRA'S ROCKY LEDGE: *"THE GUN!"* HE PANTS, *"QUICK!"*

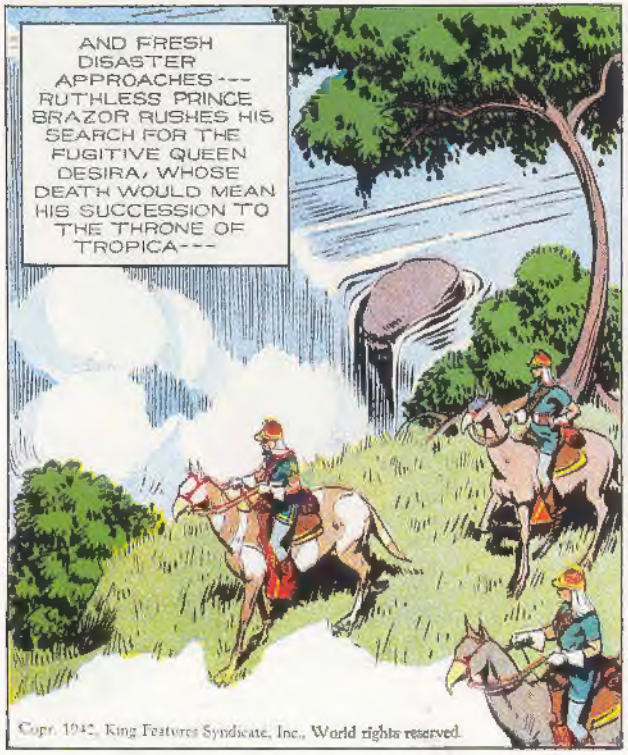
WITH SURE AIM, FLASH ADMINISTERS THE DEATH-BLOW TO THE GHOULISH TERROR OF THE UNDERGROUND CAVES!

8-2-42.

IN HER REACTION AND RELIEF, DESIRA IS NO LONGER A QUEEN AND A HEROINE--SHE IS JUST A WOMAN, FRIGHTENED OF THIS WEIRD, SUBTERRANEAN WORLD OF HORRORS: *"OH, FLASH--TAKE CARE OF ME!"* SHE MURMURS.

NEXT WEEK. "THE ASSASSIN OF THE WHIRLPOOL





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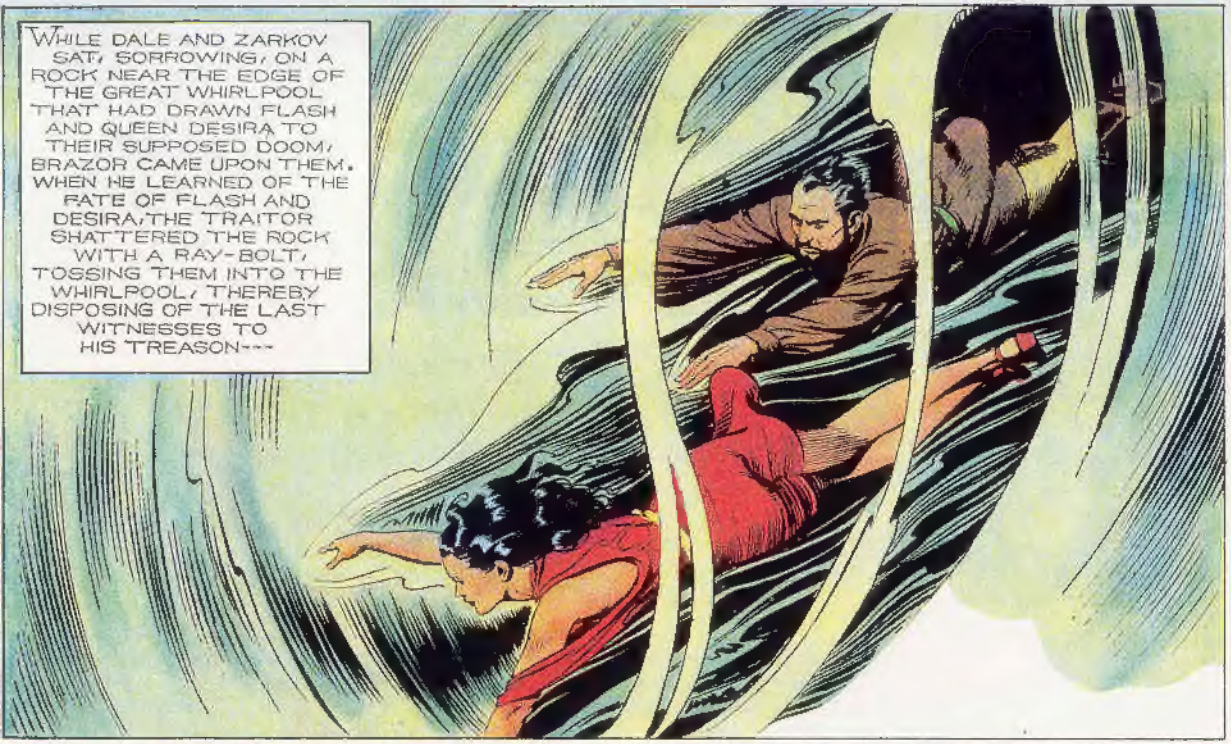
WHILE DALE AND ZARKOV SAT, SORROWING, ON A ROCK NEAR THE EDGE OF THE GREAT WHIRLPOOL THAT HAD DRAWN FLASH AND QUEEN DESIRA TO THEIR SUPPOSED DOOM, BRAZOR CAME UPON THEM. WHEN HE LEARNED OF THE FATE OF FLASH AND DESIRA, THE TRAITOR SHATTERED THE ROCK WITH A RAY-BOLT, TOSSING THEM INTO THE WHIRLPOOL, THEREBY DISPOSING OF THE LAST WITNESSES TO HIS TREASON---

THE POWERFUL SUCTION DRAGS DALE AND ZARKOV DOWN THE UNDERGROUND TUNNEL. ZARKOV CLAMPS HIS HAND OVER DALE'S NOSE AND MOUTH TO KEEP HER FROM DROWNING---

THE UPSWEEPING CURRENT ENDS IN A GEYSER, WHICH FLINGS THEM, BATTERED AND BREATHLESS, UPON THE SAME UNDERGROUND LEDGE THAT FLASH AND DESIRA SO RECENTLY LEFT---

"WHAT'S THAT HORRIBLE MONSTER?" WHISPERS DALE.
"IT'S DEAD!" REPLIES ZARKOV, "LOOKS AS IF IT HAD BEEN RAY-GUNNED--- DALE! DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS? FLASH MAY HAVE SURVIVED TOO!"

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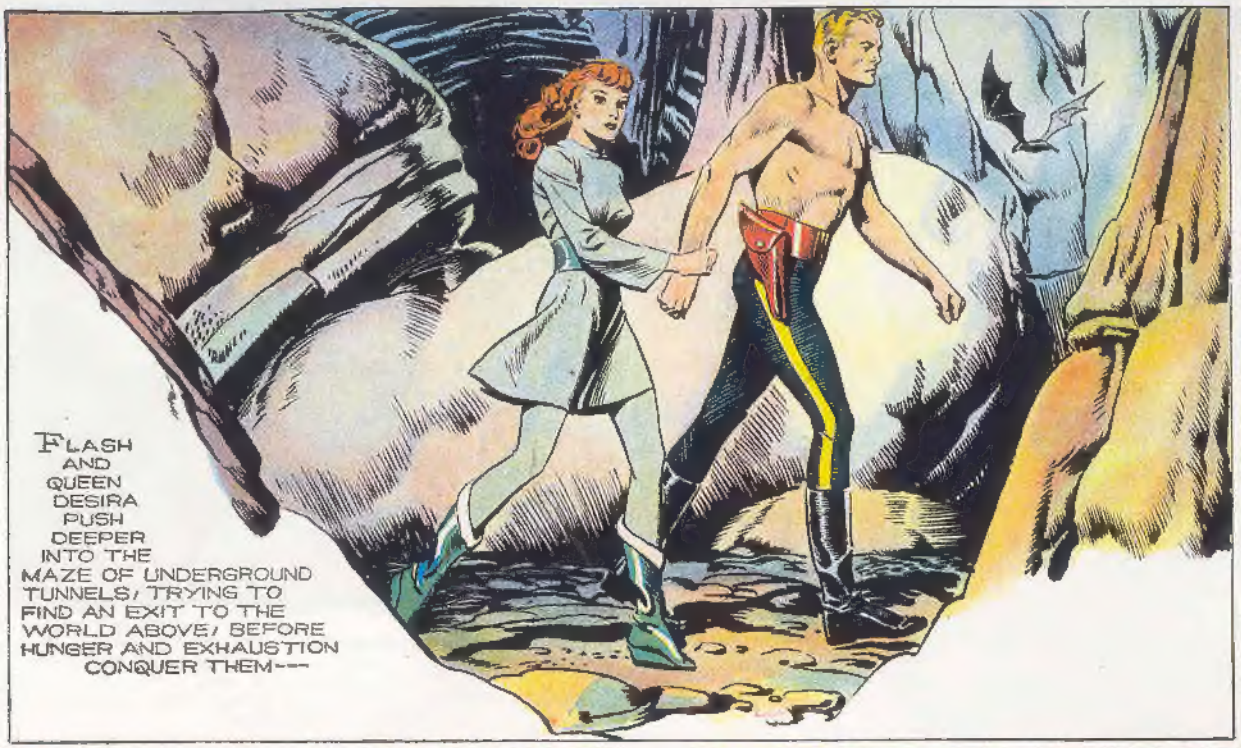
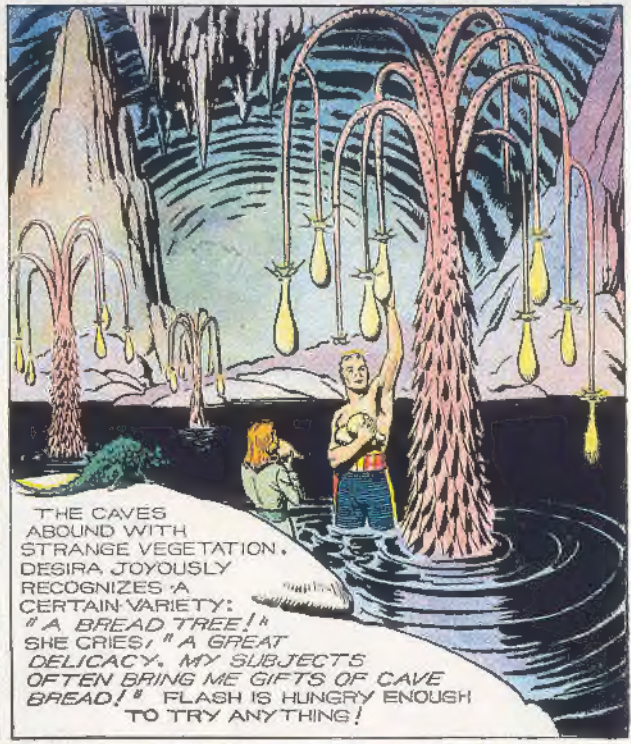
THE GREAT SCIENTIST, ZARKOV, STUDIES THE CAVE AND FINDS TRACES THAT MAY BE DAMP FOOTSTEPS, LEADING INTO A CAVE TUNNEL. DALE HURRIES AHEAD, CALLING: "FLASH! FLASH, DARLING!" BUT ONLY HOLLOW ECHOES ANSWER HER CRIES.
8-16-42.
* NEXT WEEK *
WORLD OF WONDERS





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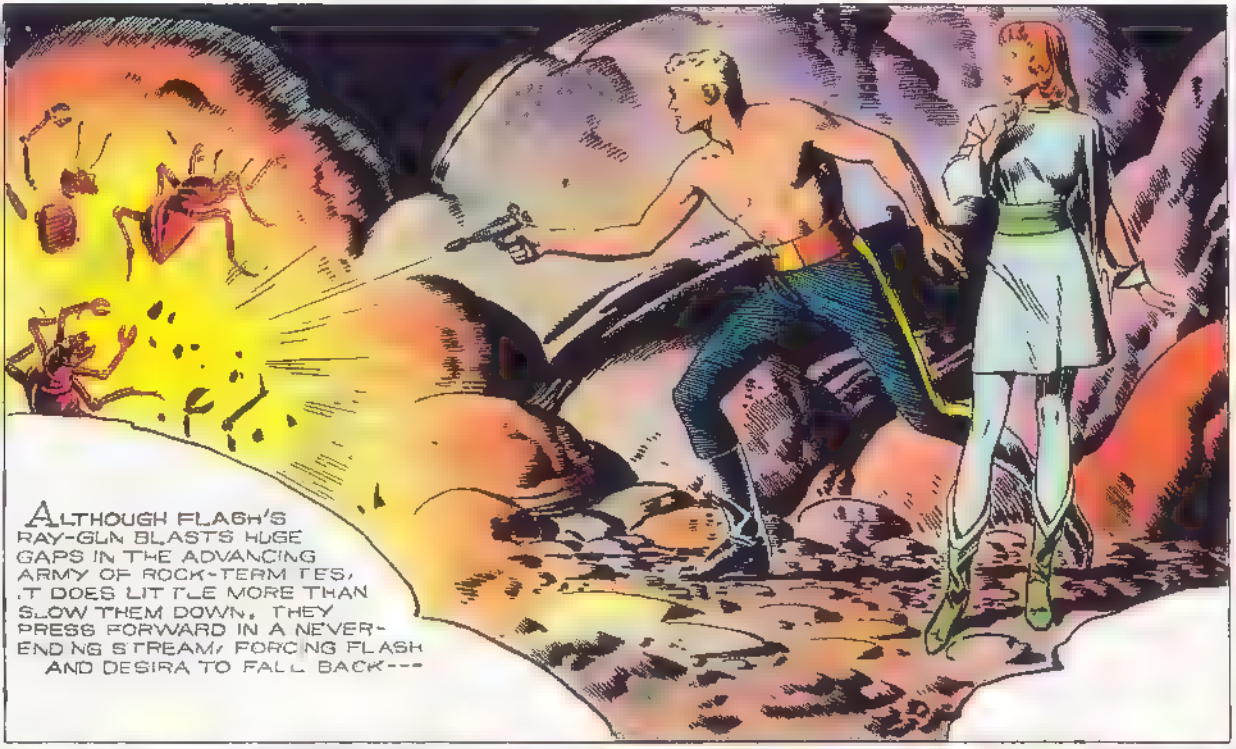

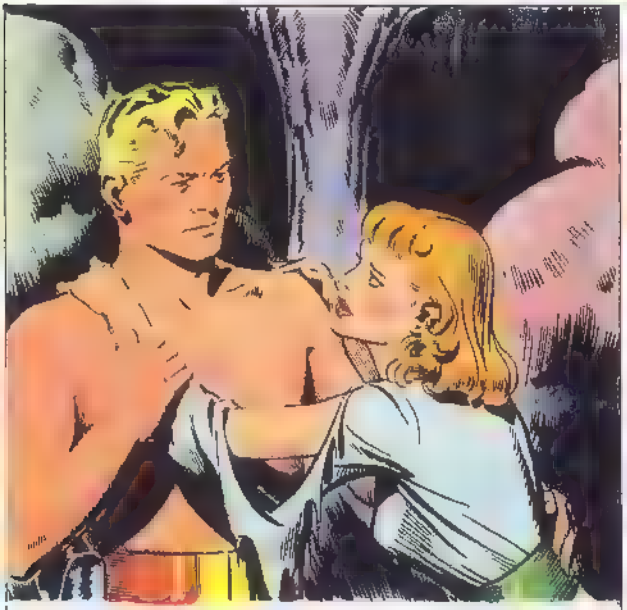

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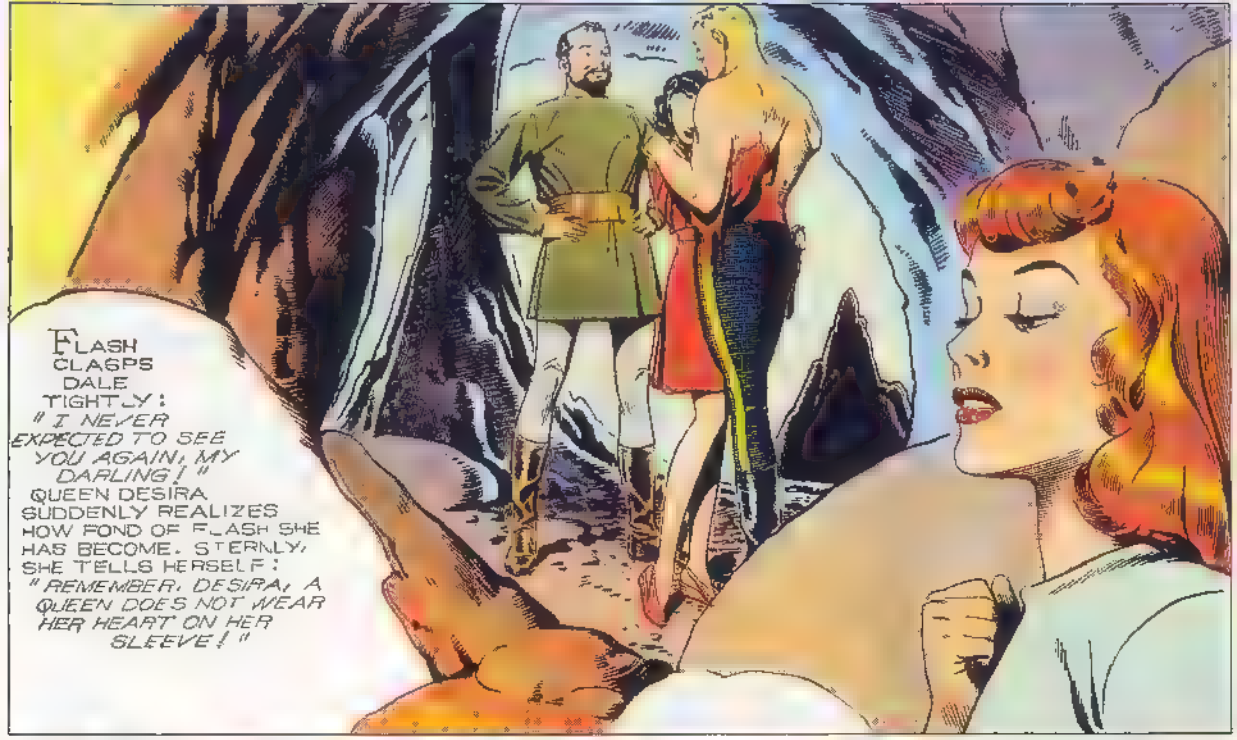
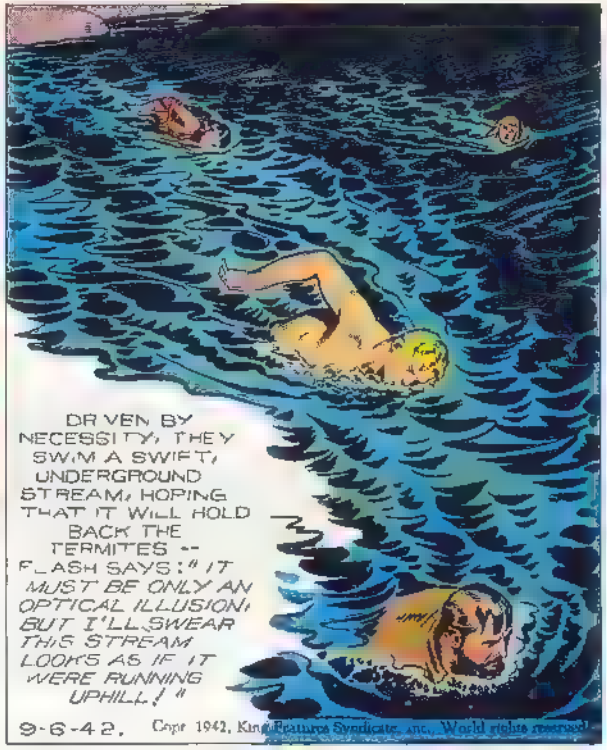

FLASH CLASPS DALE TIGHTLY: "I NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE YOU AGAIN, MY DARLING!" QUEEN DESIRA SUDDENLY REALIZES HOW FOND OF FLASH SHE HAS BECOME. STERNLY, SHE TELLS HERSELF: "REMEMBER, DESIRA, A QUEEN DOES NOT WEAR HER HEART ON HER SLEEVE!"

AN OMINOUS SOUND INTERRUPTS THE REUNION -- FLASH WHIRLS: "THE ROCK TERMITES ARE BURROWING TOWARD US THROUGH THE ROCK-BARRIER! WE MUST RUN FOR OUR LIVES!"

FLASH GUARDS THE REAR, SLOWING THE RAVENOUS INSECTS WITH WELL-PLACED RAY BLASTS. THEIR DESPERATE ATTEMPTS TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THE ROCKY MAZE ONLY LEADS THEM FARTHER UNDERGROUND--


DRIVEN BY NECESSITY, THEY SWIM A SWIFT, UNDERGROUND STREAM, HOPING THAT IT WILL HOLD BACK THE TERMITES -- FLASH SAYS: "IT MUST BE ONLY AN OPTICAL ILLUSION, BUT I'LL SWEAR THIS STREAM LOOKS AS IF IT WERE RUNNING UPHILL!"
9-6-42.
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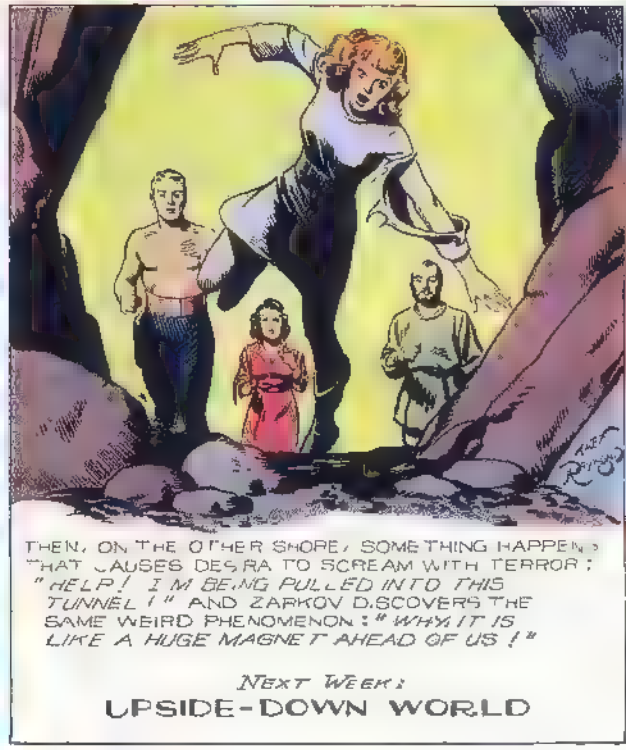
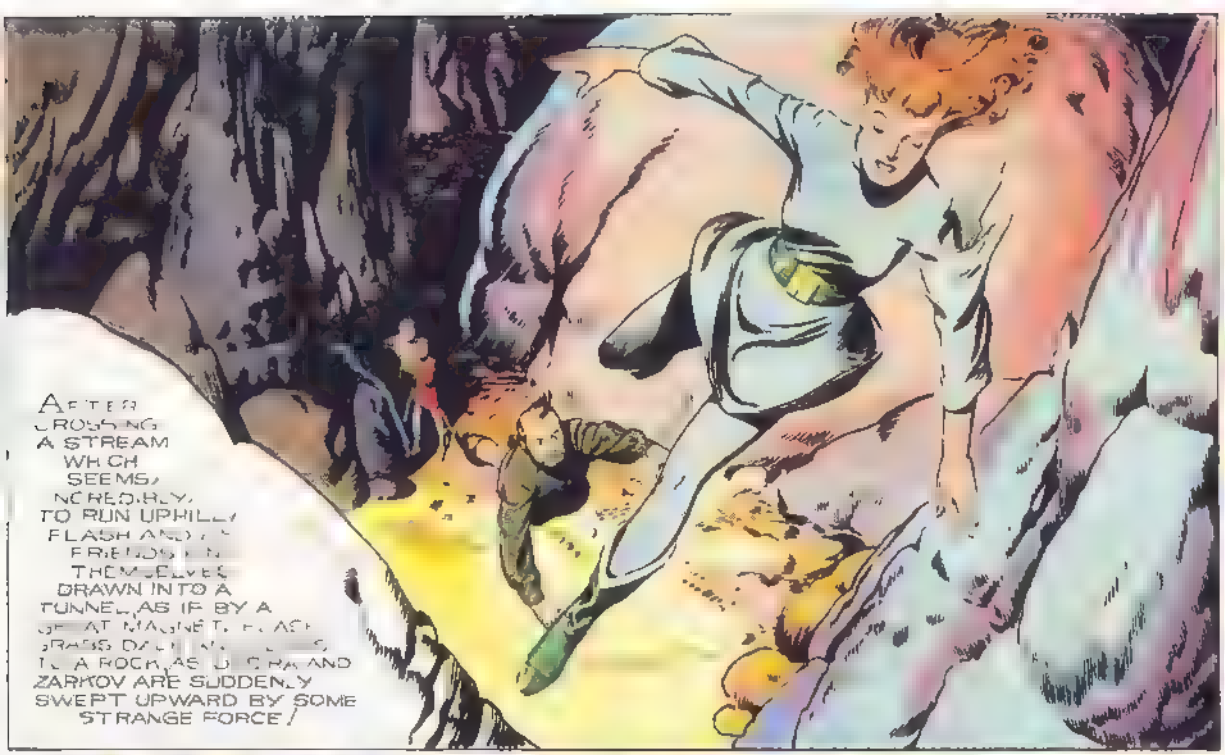
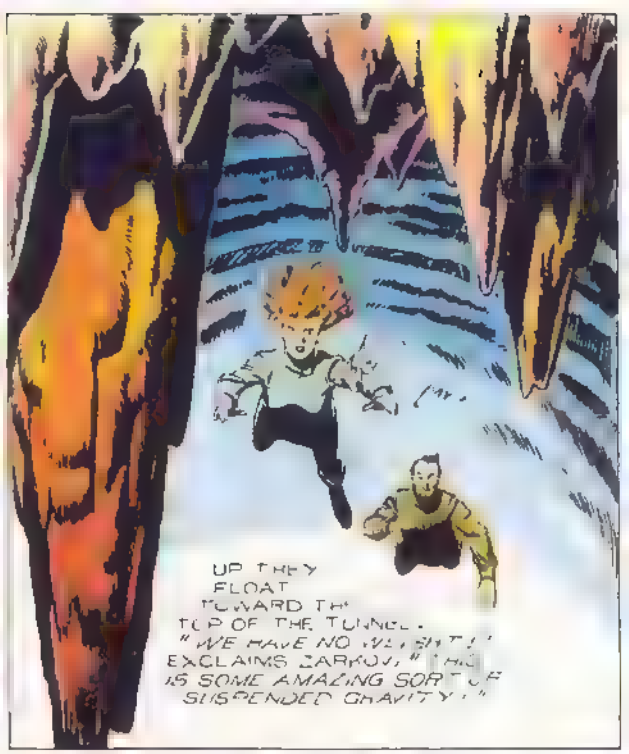
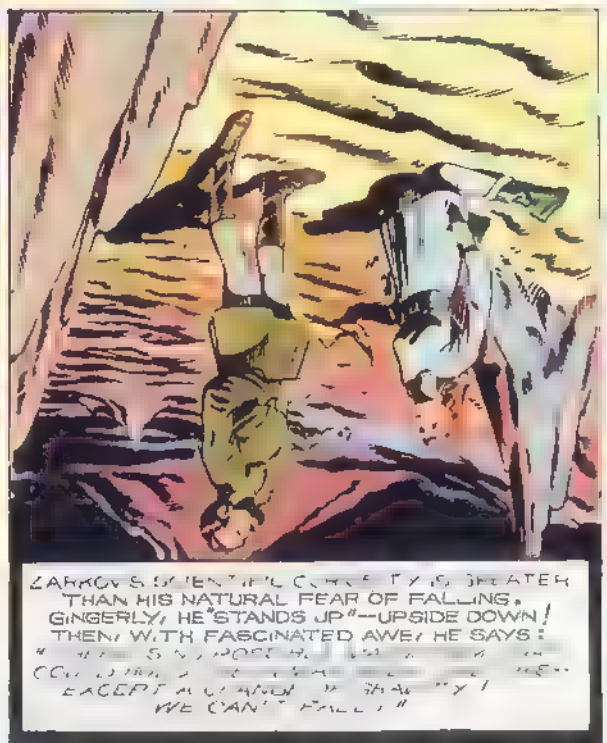
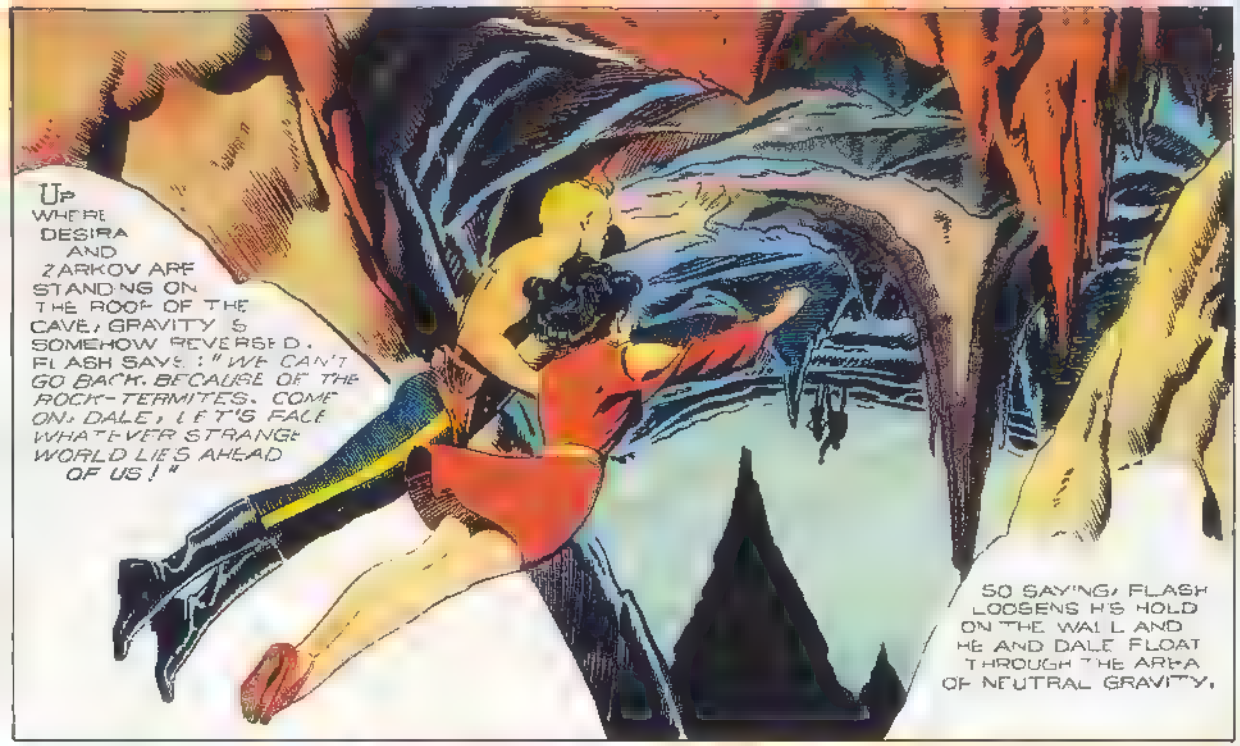

THEN, ON THE OTHER SHORE, SOMETHING HAPPENS THAT CAUSES DESIRA TO SCREAM WITH TERROR: "HELP! I'M BEING PULLED INTO THIS TUNNEL!" AND ZARKOV DISCOVERS THE SAME WEIRD PHENOMENON: "WHY, IT IS LIKE A HUGE MAGNET AHEAD OF US!"
NEXT WEEK:
UPSIDE-DOWN WORLD

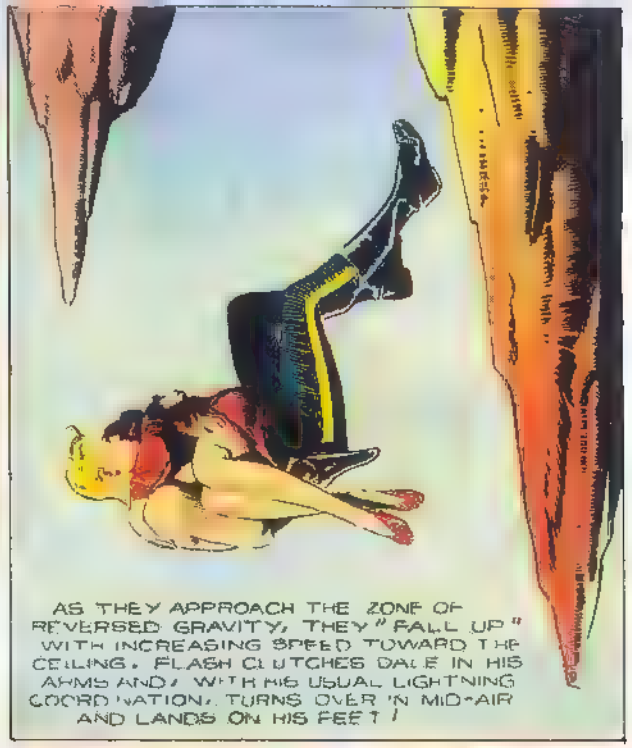

AFTER CROSSING A STREAM WHICH SEEMS, INCREDIBLY, TO RUN UPHILL, FLASH AND HIS FRIENDS FIND THEMSELVES DRAWN INTO A TUNNEL, AS IF BY A GREAT MAGNET, FLASH GRASS DALE AND ZARKOV ARE SUDDENLY SWEPT UPWARD BY SOME STRANGE FORCE!

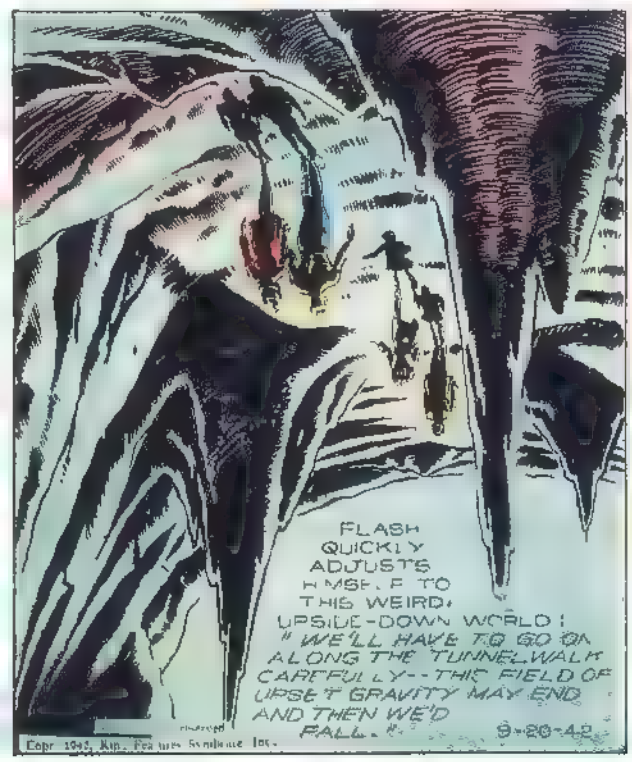

UP THEY FLOAT TOWARD THE TOP OF THE TUNNEL. "WE HAVE NO WEIGHT!" EXCLAIMS ZARKOV, "THIS IS SOME AMAZING SORT OF SUSPENDED GRAVITY!"


ZARKOV'S SCIENTIFIC CURIOSITY IS GREATER THAN HIS NATURAL FEAR OF FALLING. GINGERLY, HE STANDS UP—UPSIDE DOWN! THEN, WITH FASCINATED AWE, HE SAYS: "WE CAN'T FALL!"

FLASH, DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO THE POINT OF ZARKOV STARTED FALLING UP—HOLDS DALE SAFELY BY CLUTCHING THE SIDE OF THE TUNNEL WALL. BUT AS HE WATCHES ZARKOV, HE
NEXT WEEK:
WHERE GRAVITY GOES CRAZY


UP WHERE DESIRA AND ZARKOV ARE STANDING ON THE ROOF OF THE CAVE, GRAVITY IS SOMEHOW REVERSED. FLASH SAYS: "WE CAN'T GO BACK, BECAUSE OF THE ROCK-TERMITES. COME ON, DALE, LET'S FACE WHATEVER STRANGE WORLD LIES AHEAD OF US!"
SO SAYING, FLASH LOOSENS HIS HOLD ON THE WALL AND HE AND DALE FLOAT THROUGH THE AREA OF NEUTRAL GRAVITY.


AS THEY APPROACH THE ZONE OF REVERSED GRAVITY, THEY "FALL UP" WITH INCREASING SPEED TOWARD THE CEILING. FLASH CLUTCHES DALE IN HIS ARMS AND, WITH HIS USUAL LIGHTNING COORDINATION, TURNS OVER IN MID-AIR AND LANDS ON HIS FEET!


FLASH QUICKLY ADJUSTS HIMSELF TO THIS WEIRD, UPSIDE-DOWN WORLD: "WE'LL HAVE TO GO ON ALONG THE TUNNEL. WALK CAREFULLY--THIS FIELD OF UPSET GRAVITY MAY END AND THEN WE'D FALL."
9-20-42
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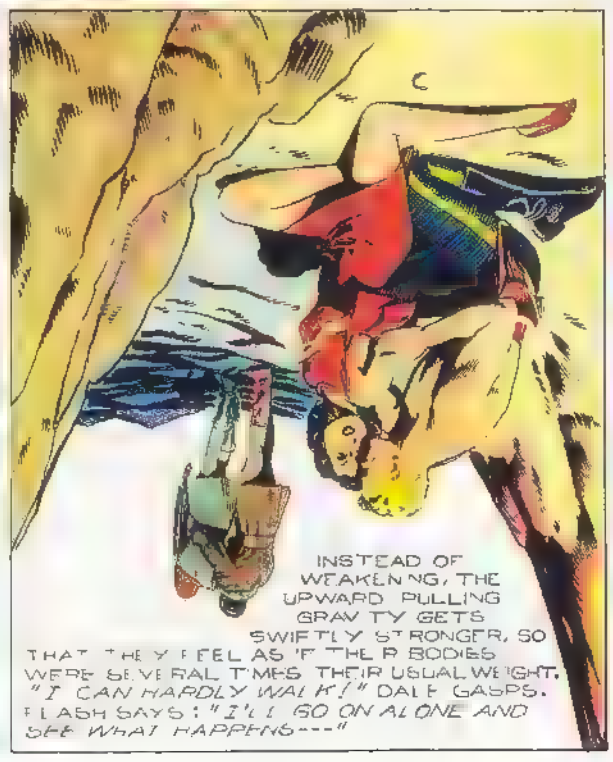
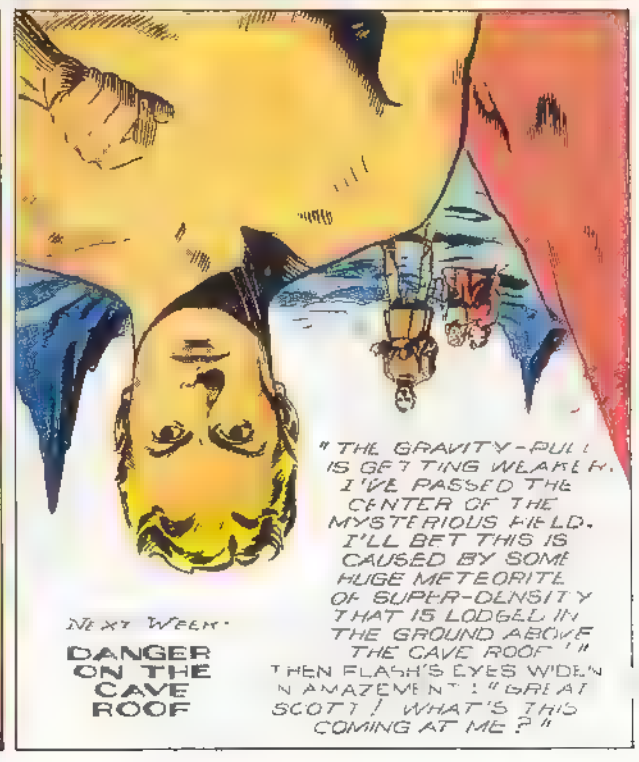
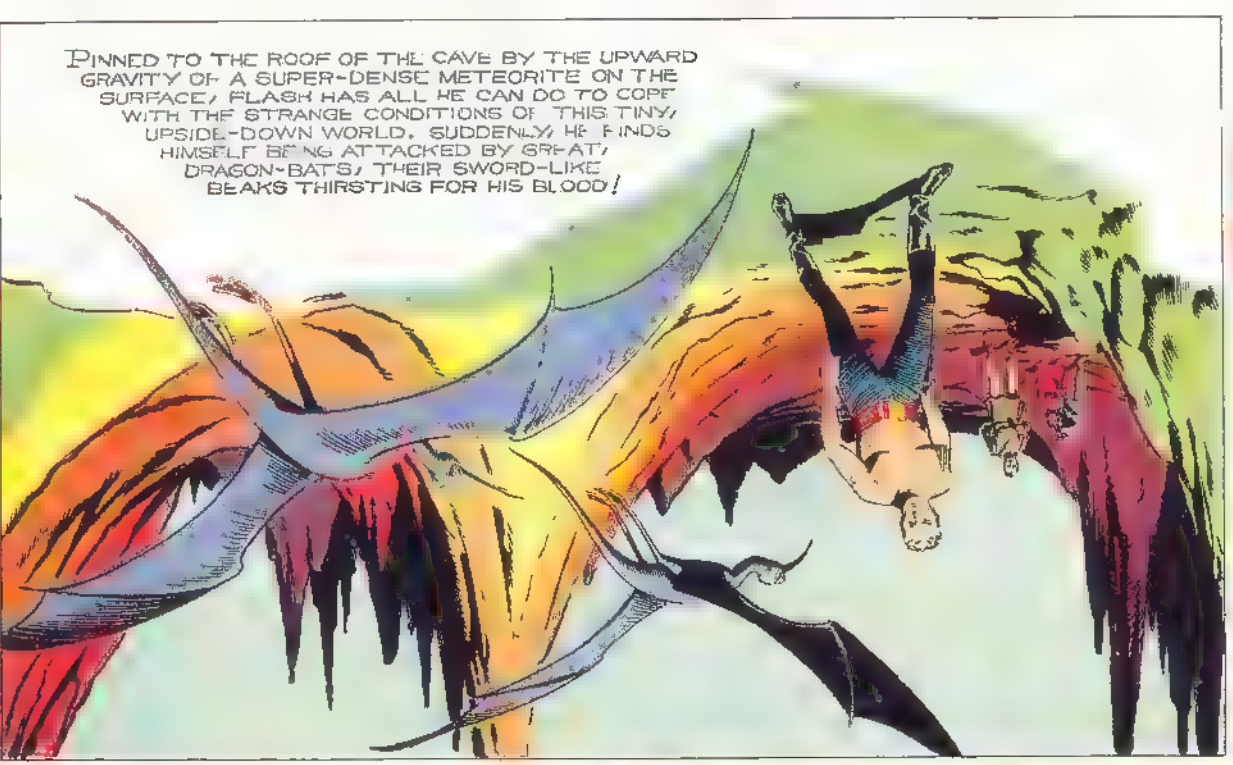
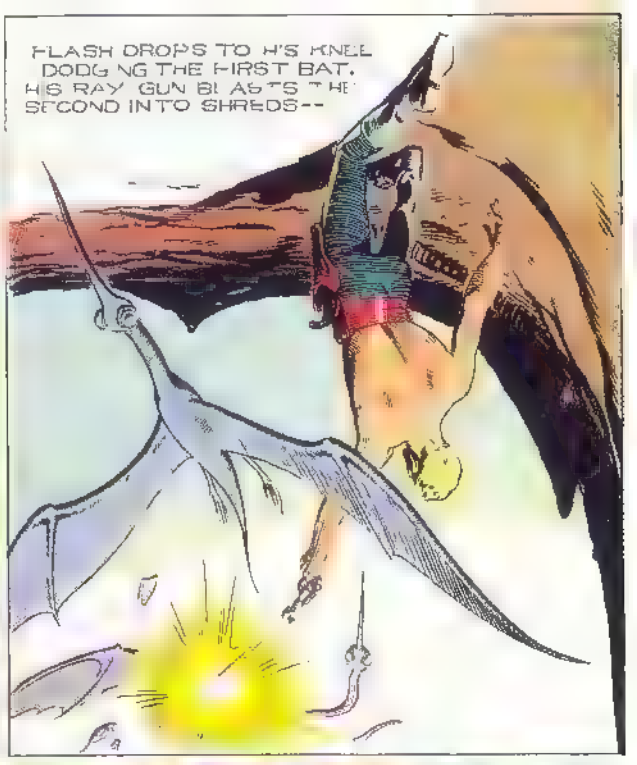
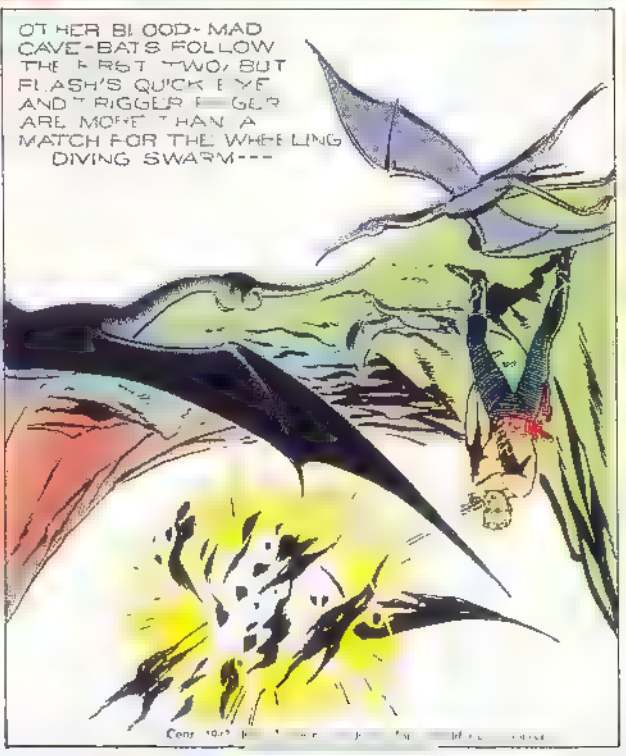
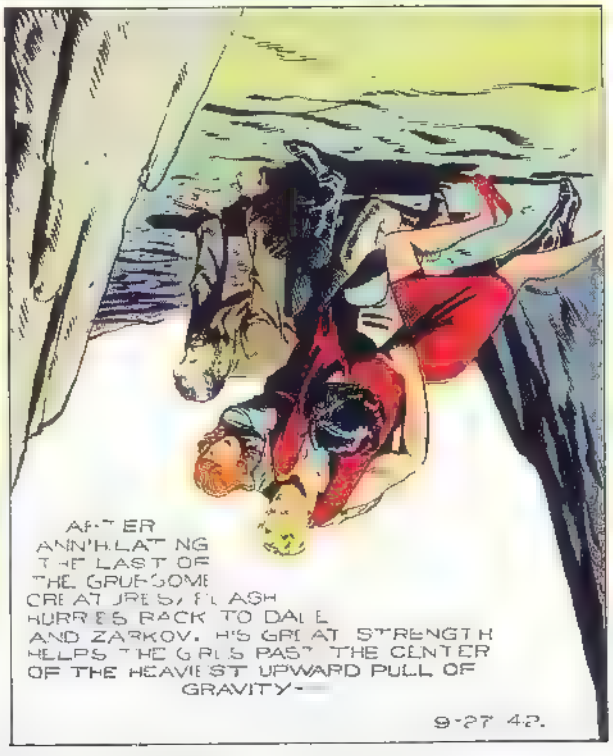

INSTEAD OF WEAKENING, THE UPWARD PULLING GRAVITY GETS SWIFTLY STRONGER, SO THAT THEY FEEL AS IF THEIR BODIES WERE SEVERAL TIMES THEIR USUAL WEIGHT. "I CAN HARDLY WALK!" DALE GASPS. FLASH SAYS: "I'LL GO ON ALONE AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS---"


"THE GRAVITY-PULL IS GETTING WEAKER. I'VE PASSED THE CENTER OF THE MYSTERIOUS FIELD. I'LL BET THIS IS CAUSED BY SOME HUGE METEORITE OF SUPER-DENSITY THAT IS LODGED IN THE GROUND ABOVE THE CAVE ROOF!"
THEN FLASH'S EYES WIDEN IN AMAZEMENT: "GREAT SCOTT! WHAT'S THIS COMING AT ME?"
NEXT WEEK:
DANGER ON THE CAVE ROOF

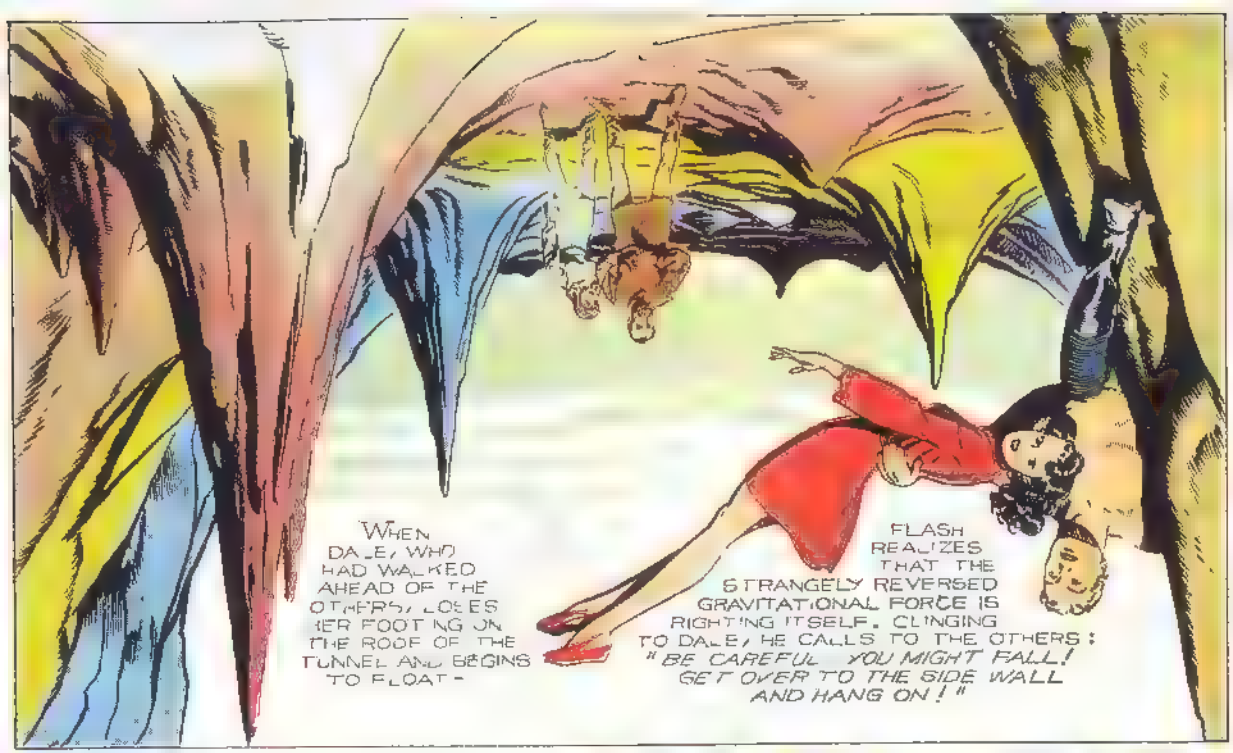

PINNED TO THE ROOF OF THE CAVE BY THE UPWARD GRAVITY OF A SUPER-DENSE METEORITE ON THE SURFACE, FLASH HAS ALL HE CAN DO TO COPE WITH THE STRANGE CONDITIONS OF THIS TINY, UPSIDE-DOWN WORLD. SUDDENLY, HE FINDS HIMSELF BEING ATTACKED BY GREAT, DRAGON-BATS, THEIR SWORD-LIKE BEAKS THIRSTING FOR HIS BLOOD!

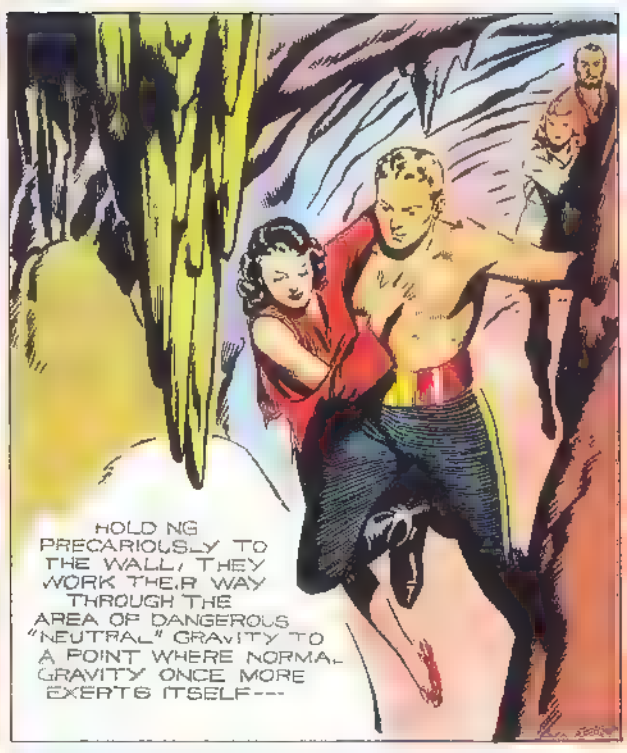

FLASH DROPS TO HIS KNEE DODGING THE FIRST BAT. HIS RAY GUN BLASTS THE SECOND INTO SHREDS--


OTHER BLOOD-MAD CAVE-BATS FOLLOW THE FIRST TWO, BUT FLASH'S QUICK EYE AND TRIGGER FINGER ARE MORE THAN A MATCH FOR THE WHEELING DIVING SWARM---


AFTER ANNIHILATING THE LAST OF THE GRUESOME CREATURES, FLASH HURRIES BACK TO DALE AND ZARKOV. HIS GREAT STRENGTH HELPS THE GIRLS PAST THE CENTER OF THE HEAVIEST UPWARD PULL OF GRAVITY--
9-27 42.

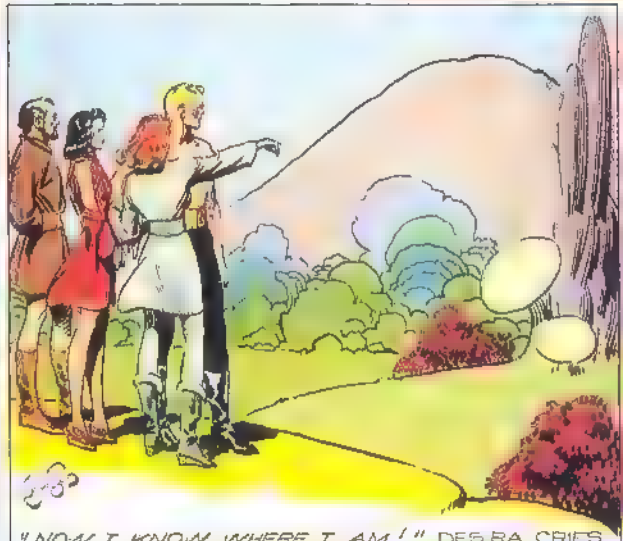
AS THEY CONTINUE ALONG THE CEILING, THE GRAVITATIONAL PULL BECOMES STEADILY WEAKER-- UNTIL DALE BEGINS TO FLOAT. SHE CRIES OUT AND FLASH GRABS HER, SHOUTING: "CAREFUL, EVERYBODY! GRAVITY IS RIGHTING ITSELF!"
NEXT WEEK
OUT OF THE UPSIDE-DOWN WORLD





THEN, SUDDENLY, THERE IS SUNLIGHT AHEAD! FREEDOM AT LAST! WITH CRIES OF JOY, THE FOUR WEARY, HUNGRY FUGITIVES RUSH TOWARD THE TUNNEL'S EXIT---

10-4-42.



"NOW I KNOW WHERE I AM!" DESRA CRIES, AS THEY REACH OPEN GROUND, "THAT'S OUR FAMOUS 'MAGNET MOUNTAIN'- NO WONDER EVERYTHING IN THE TUNNEL WAS SO MIXED UP! NOW I CAN FIND THE WAY TO MY CAPITAL!" FLASH SAYS: "BUT MAYBE YOUR TREACHEROUS COUSIN, PRINCE BRAZOR, HAS GOT THERE FIRST!"

✧ NEXT WEEK ✧

THE LIVING DEAD

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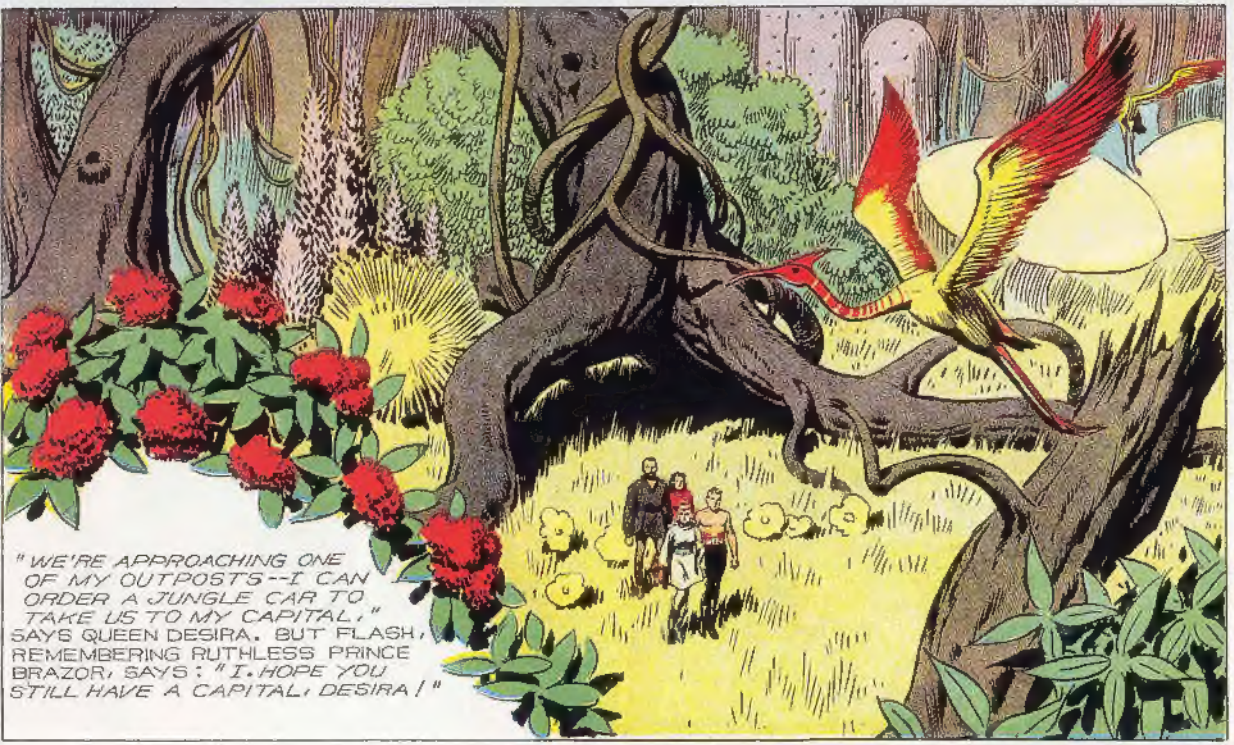

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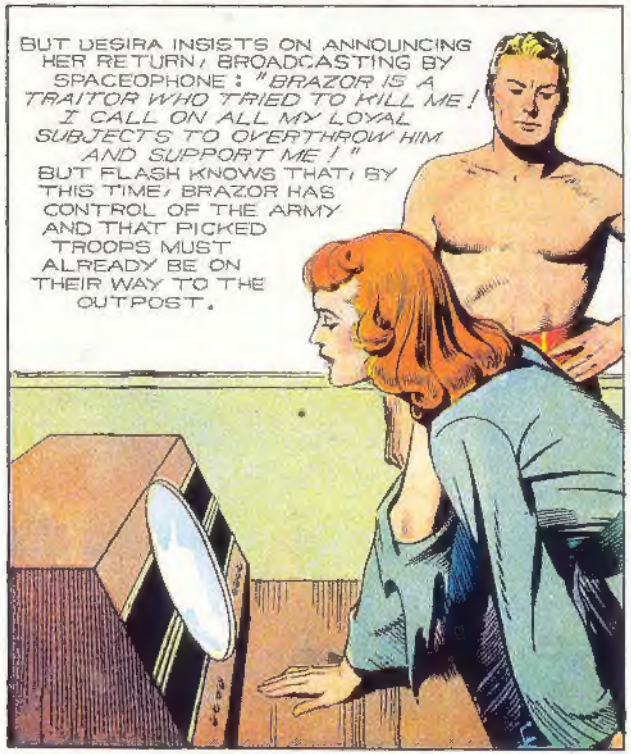

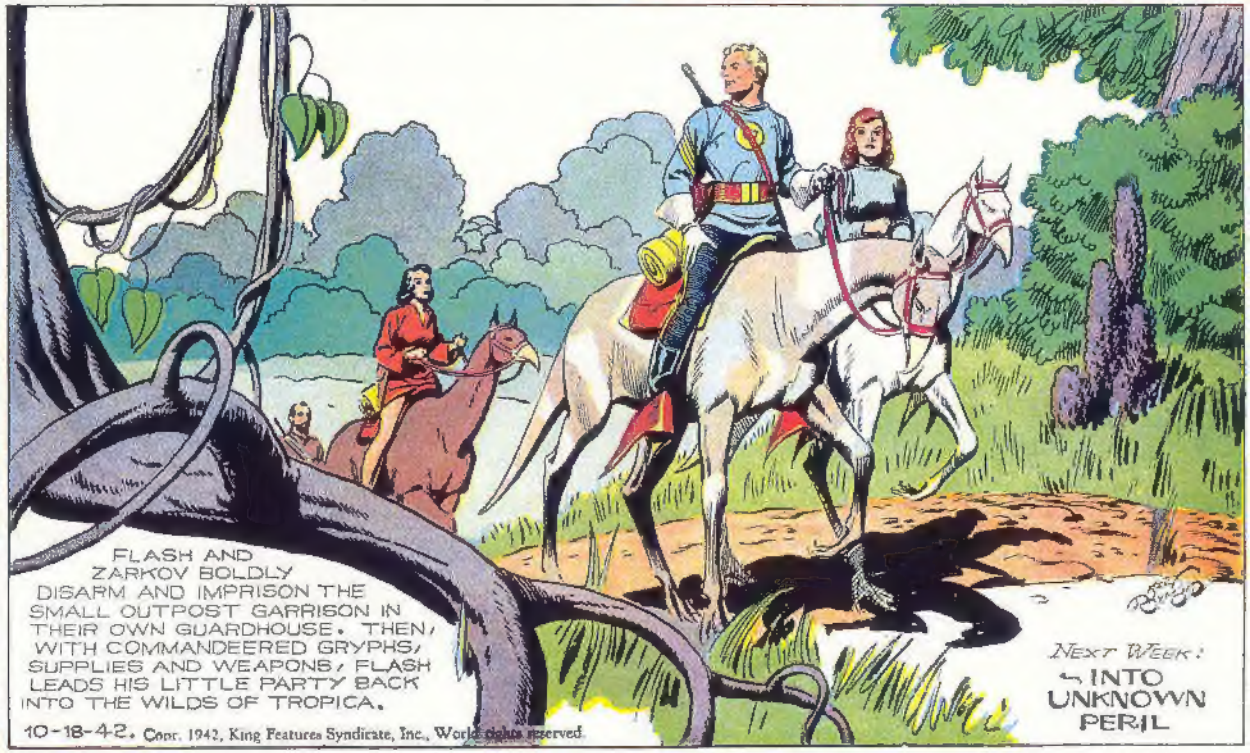

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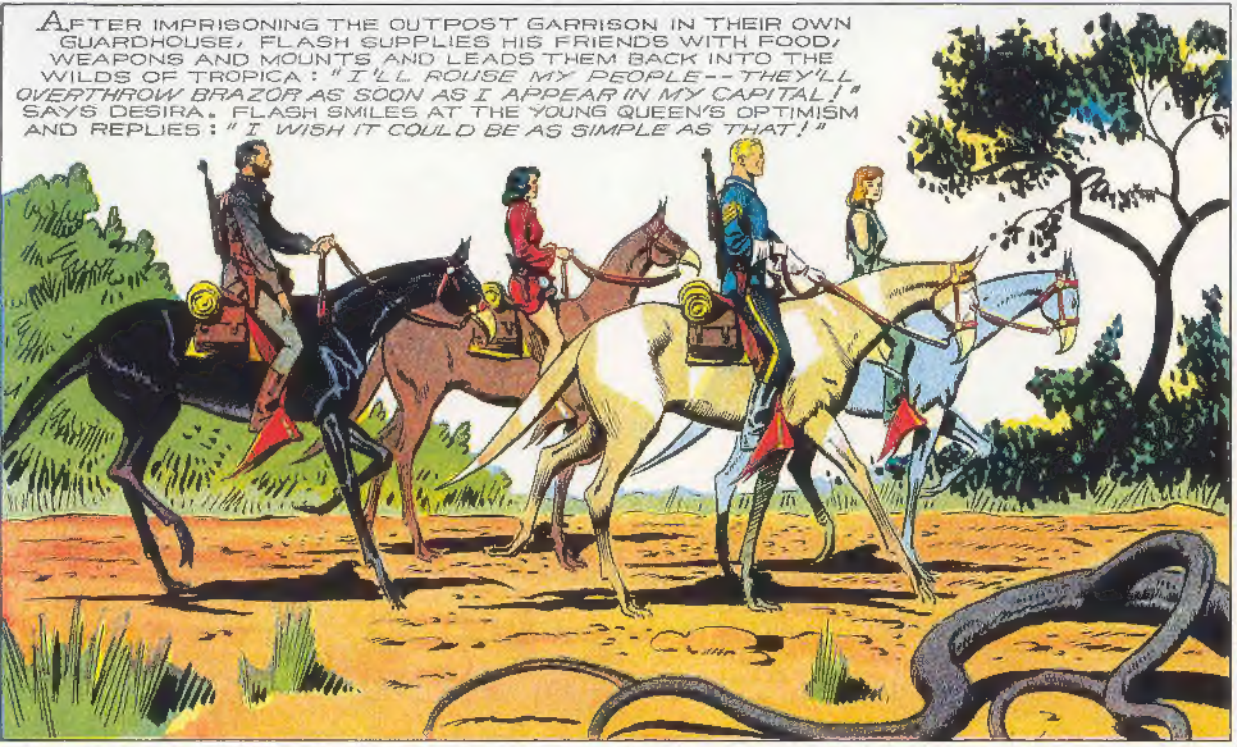

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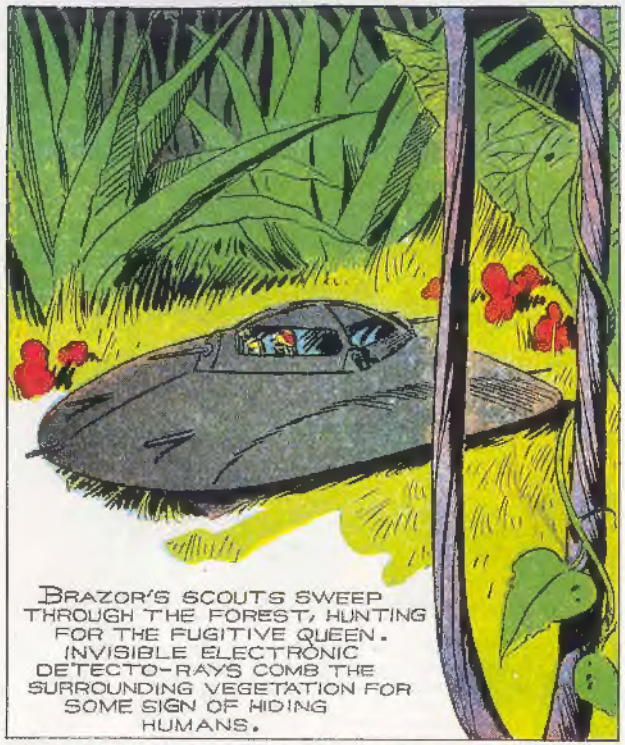

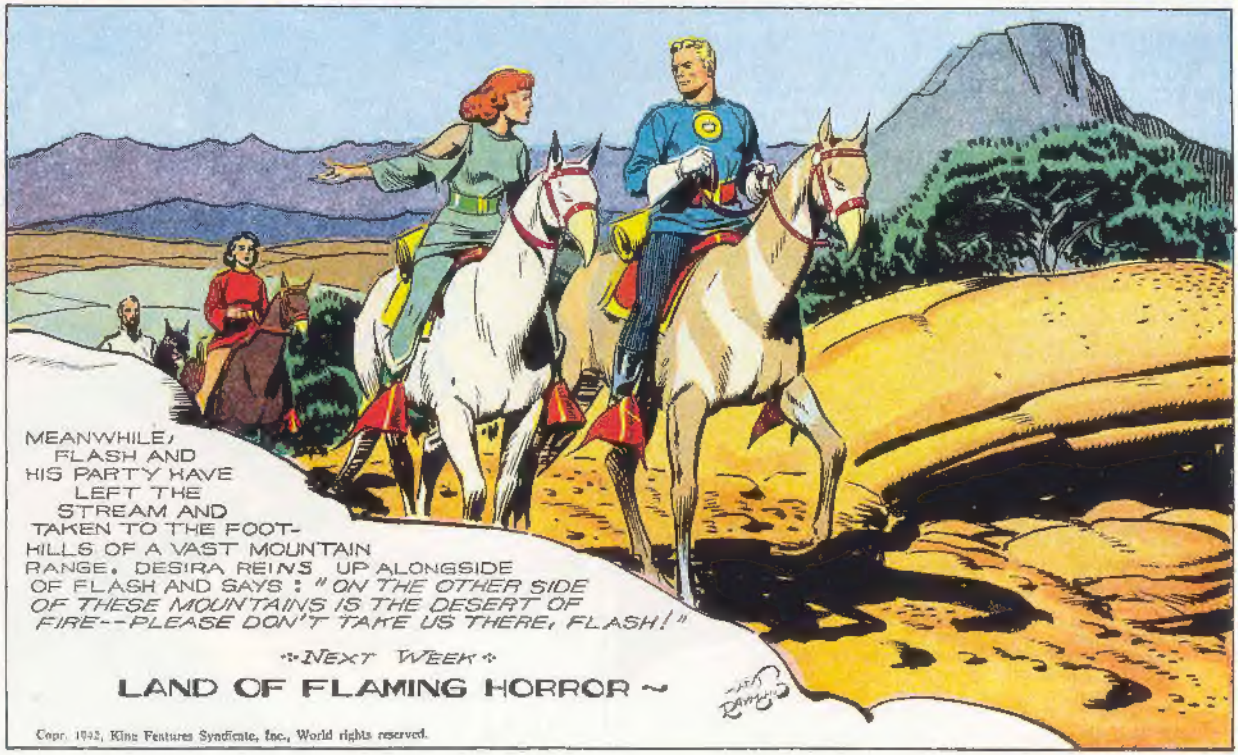

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